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New England Aquarium Expert To Speak On Right Whales April 20

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April 10, 2007

DURHAM, N.H. -- Scott Kraus, principal scientist and director of research at the New England Aquarium, comes to University of New Hampshire Friday, April 20 to speak about the biology and conservation of the North Atlantic right whale. His talk, "Urban Whale, Right Whales at the Crossroads," is at 3 p.m. in Richards Auditorium of Murkland Hall and is free and open to the public.

Kraus has studied the right whale, a species that has been severely impacted by human interaction, extensively since 1980. He serves as a member of the national right whale recovery team and numerous other national and regional teams working to insure the survival of this majestic marine mammal.

Kraus received his Ph.D. from the University of New Hampshire. In addition to his work with the aquarium, he has been a visiting professor at the College of the Atlantic in Maine and has taught for several years at the Massachusetts Bay Marine Studies Consortium.

The North Atlantic right whale is considered the rarest large whale in the world, with a population numbering only 350 animals. They were named for being the "right" whales to hunt, because they swam close to shore, were slow-moving and easy to catch, and floated when dead. They had been hunted to near extinction by the late 1800s, and have been protected internationally since 1935. Today, nearly 50 percent of right whale mortalities are due to ship-strikes or entanglements in fishing gear.

The lecture is sponsored by the UNH Marine Program; refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Linda Wade at linda.wade@unh.edu or 603-862-2987.